



# News Release

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## **Vaccine Command and Coordination System (VACCS) leverages unique public-private partnership innovations to help Washingtonians find vaccine appointments**

**OLYMPIA** – The Vaccine Command and Coordination System (VACCS) Center continues to bring large and small Northwest employers together for a common goal: to help all eligible Washingtonians get vaccinated. This unique public-private partnership includes both large and small Northwest employers coming together for a common goal: making it easier for all Washingtonians, whether digitally savvy or not, to easily find information about vaccines and vaccine providers, schedule an appointment and then receive their COVID-19 vaccine.

In early February, the VACCS Center identified several areas for improvement within the appointment system, including:

- The need for a central location for Washingtonians to find a provider near them with vaccine appointments, and a link to the appointment registration sites for those providers.
- The need to improve the experience for callers to the state COVID-19 assistance hotline (1-800-525-0127) by reducing hold times and increasing capacity to schedule vaccine appointments.

The VACCS Center is now pleased to announce three points of progress:

### **New and improved COVID-19 Vaccine Locator tool**

On March 17, DOH launched the latest version of the [Vaccine Locator tool](#), a user-friendly web app that displays available COVID vaccination appointments from multiple provider scheduling sites in one place.

The tool works on both desktop computers and mobile devices and is available in multiple languages. The tool prominently displays the hotline number for individuals who need or want additional support to schedule an appointment.

### **Improved Hotline Capacity**

To date, the state's COVID-19 hotline agents have helped more than 14,000 Washingtonians schedule vaccination appointments. To assist with wait times and to make it easier to make vaccine appointments, two key changes have been made:

- On March 11, the hotline added an interactive voice response tool that allows callers with vaccine questions to self serve before reaching an agent.
- On March 22, a team of Amazon call center representatives will begin to support existing hotline staff to schedule vaccine appointments. The addition of Amazon agents is designed to further reduce wait times and make vaccine appointments easier to get for people who want and need them now.

DOH and WA 211 welcome Amazon's partnership to continue to improve the hotline's functionality and improve caller experience.

### **Playbook for Partnered Vaccine Programs**

On March 18, [Challenge Seattle](#) published the [Playbook for Partnered Vaccine Programs](#). This guide is designed to aid organizations who want to quickly stand up a vaccination site or would like background on setting up a public-private partnership to aid mass vaccination efforts.

The Playbook includes valuable lessons learned by public and private partners involved in setting up numerous vaccination sites in Washington state. The guide shares the experience and best practices learned over the last several months and is designed to help any group seeking to set up or improve an existing vaccination site. The playbook's insights apply to vaccination sites from small to very large.

"We have been honored and humbled by the private companies who have stepped up and offered their expertise and resources to aid in our vaccination efforts. Leading Northwest employers such as Microsoft, Starbucks, Amazon, Costco, Expedia, Kaiser Permanente, Providence, the Bill and

Melinda Gates Foundation and others have been absolutely amazing,” said VACCS Center Director Dan Laster. “But we don’t want to forget the smaller companies like Prota Ventures and volunteer groups like [COVIDWA.com](https://www.covidwa.com) and Vaccine Bookers who have also come forward with one goal in mind: helping to get shots in the arms of Washingtonians in the safest, most efficient and equitable way possible and we are excited to see what the next six weeks will bring.”

“We are thrilled to see such great progress in such a short time,” said Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH, Secretary of Health. “To harness the power of the private sector to support the Washington State Department of Health in all of the critical work they’ve been doing to help us all through this pandemic has been truly impressive. We are so thankful to partners on every side who have helped create these key improvements to help the people of Washington get vaccinated.”

On January 18, Governor Jay Inslee [established the VACCS Center](#) to harness the incredible resources, capabilities and innovations of the private sector in Washington State to partner with DOH with the goal of achieving mass vaccination of Washingtonians in a safe, fast, equitable, and efficient manner.

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